

JEREMIAH

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Choosing God.

Jeremiah 11-13.

King Josiah was reigning and had chosen to seek God. While repairing the temple they had found the Law books, [2 Kings 22:1ff](#), this had caused a short term turning of the people to the true God, cleaning the nation of idolatry worship. Unfortunately the hearts of the people was still not worshipping the true God. The idol worship was still present.

In these following chapters we find Jeremiah recording, knowing their hearts, the sins of the nation and praying for their repentance.

The Covenant is broken - punishment is the result.

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Jeremiah 11:1-17. King Josiah had lead the people into making a promise to obey the Laws of God, [2 Kings 23:3](#),

The king was sincere but the people were actually only doing it to "keep up with the crowd."

God had made many Covenants with Israel,

[Genesis 12:1-3](#);

[Genesis 26:1-5](#);

[Genesis 35:1-15](#);

[Exodus 19 to 20](#),

But idol worship would rapidly reappeared, [Exodus 32:1ff](#). If the people obeyed the covenants then God would bless them.

See also [Deuteronomy 27 to 28](#);

[Joshua 8:30-35](#).

Jeremiah now reminds them of their past, what God had done and His blessings given. He then turns to remind them what would happen if they failed to keep the Covenants, *"your reward or punishment will be based upon your attitude to the worship and how you carry out the worship."*

Jeremiah is shown by God that the people were really conspiring against the king Josiah, he wanted them to worship God, but the people preferred to turn to the idols and break the covenant. The people were still thinking that as His chosen people they would not be punished.

However, disaster was coming, they could call out to their idols, but get no answer, even if they turned back to God for help, He would not respond. Their temple worship, their sacrifices, would not change the situation, because it did not come from their hearts. They thought that they were a "prized olive tree," but God said the tree was about to be destroyed.

See [Romans 2:24](#).

Jeremiah is instructed not to pray for the people again by God. verse 14.

God gave a similar message to the Church, "repent or else" [Revelation ch. 2 to 3](#).

Jeremiah 11:18-23: The messages from God given to Jeremiah to give to the people is now causing a problem for him personally. The men of Anathoth, the home town of Jeremiah, are now plotting to kill him, rather than repent they want to destroy the messenger. They believed the false prophets and believed Jeremiah was wrong.

Jeremiah is told by God of this threat, verses 18,19. All Jeremiah can do is trust God with his safety, verse 20. God tells Jeremiah that He will deal with these people when the Babylonians come.

Jeremiah has questions

Jeremiah 12:1-6: Jeremiah is having a problem, he wants to know why God is allowing false prophets and the evil priests to apparently win in their ministries and he, God's true messenger is suffering. verse 1, *"Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously?"*. This is a common question from the people of God, even today.

See also [Habakkuk 1:1ff](#);

[Malachi 2:17](#);

[Malachi 3:15](#).

Verses 5-6; God replies, *"I am the LORD, I change not."* God then tells Jeremiah that following Him is not easy, but trust and learn to trust Him, increase your faith, become more mature as God teaches, God knows exactly what He is doing.

What happens if you ignore the warnings.

[Jeremiah 12:7 - 13:27](#).

The people of Israel were the chosen people of God, they had an inheritance,

[Exodus 19:5-6](#);

[Exodus 15:17](#);

[Deuteronomy 4:20](#);

[Deuteronomy 32:9](#),

However, they would lose it if they failed to obey the true God. They still thought that as the chosen people, God would not punish them, or the Holy City, or the temple, a very false confidence. We must note the sadness in the heart of God as He allows the punishment. The future leaders of the nation, the *"shepherds, the pastors were to turn the vineyard into a wasteland."*

Yet with this punishment came a promise to return the nation and restore the temple in the future.

Jeremiah 13:1ff: God instructs Jeremiah to take his new "waist cloth", or undergarment and bury it under a rock in a river, the people knew that it would be ruined, *"good for nothing"*. They had not realized that it also showed they would be ruined, "good for nothing". The people had ignored God when they had problems, they had made themselves "worthless"

Verses 12-14: The people were preparing for a party, filling their wine containers, instead of seeking God.

Verses 15-16: Jeremiah compares the people to travellers, with no map, in the dark and lost, awaiting daylight, but "help" was not coming.

Verses 17-21: They were sheep, heading for the butcher to be killed, no one was leading them to safety, no leaders listened to the warnings. Jeremiah even spoke to the king and queen, to humble themselves before God,

[2 Kings 24:8-20](#),

Was the result of not listening. Their suffering was about to be like a woman in childbirth.

Verses 22-27: Jeremiah compares the people to a prostitute, this is a behaviour which is not permitted, according to the Law,

[Leviticus 19:29](#);

[Leviticus 21:7,14](#).

The people were offering their bodies to the idols and also asking for help from nations which did not worship God. They had become like the "waste seed shell (chaff)," to be blown by the wind, a useless waste product of the harvest.

The following chapters contain four messages and prayers to the Lord for the people,

Jeremiah was humbled before God, but gives the message with power.

Drought

[Jeremiah 14:1ff](#)

The land which was occupied by the Jewish nation depended upon direct rain fall, unlike Egypt where the Nile flood's every year. This rain was subject to the blessing of God,

[Deuteronomy 11:10-17](#);

[Leviticus 26:3-13](#),

There was no worship, therefore, no rain blessing.

Verses Jeremiah 14:1-6: The land was suffering, God had stopped the rainfall, just as God had said He would do, all people, all the animals were affected, God always keeps His Word, whether in love or punishment.

Verses Jeremiah 14:7-12: The people were turning to God in prayer, but the prayers still did not come from their hearts, there was no repentance. The people pray to God to save them, not for their sake but for His, *"do thou it for thy name's sake: for our backslidings are many; we have sinned against thee,"* verse 7. Why? *"It is your reputation that can suffer!!!"*

Consider [Romans 12:1,2](#)

God does respond to their fake prayers, with no rain, just judgement, verse 10.

Again God instructs Jeremiah not to pray for the people, He has lost patience with them, punishment is the only answer, they are responsible for their own actions, verse 12. Punishment would apply especially to those who were leading the people, the false prophets, verses 14-16.

Read [Deuteronomy 18:20-22](#);

Jeremiah 14:17-22: God and Jeremiah wept for the people's failure and sin, the Word of God cannot be violated and ignored, neither can God ignore His own words.

They had been warned.

[Jeremiah 15:1ff](#)

Moses and others had warned the Jewish people what would happen if they turned away from God, and the punishment they would receive,

[Deuteronomy 28:63-68](#);

[Judges 2:7-15](#).

The people this time were so bad that they needed to be really punished severely, *"cast them out of my sight,"* verse 1.

God had chosen the Jews to be a blessing to the world,

[Genesis 12:1-3](#),

Now they had become a nation that should be scorned, worthless, disgusted. Not only were the people to be punished but their land would also be made waste.

One cause of this terrible punishment was the King Manasseh, he was the most wicked king in Judah's history,

[2 Kings 21:1-18](#);

[2 Chronicles 33:1-10](#).

The problem was that the people copied his evil.

God had no pleasure in this judgement and punishment, God is very long suffering and loves His people, and we find Him already planning their restoration and return to Him, verses 19-21.

As a result of the message Jeremiah has become hated, a traitor to his people, verses 10-21, Jeremiah turns to God for help, who promised to deliver him, but not give protect him from the persecution, Jeremiah had to learn to walk by faith.

Jeremiah is forbidden.

[Jeremiah 16:1ff](#)

God now forbids Jeremiah to live a normal life, not to marry, to have no family, why?

The Jewish families were about to die, by sword or starvation in the Babylonian invasion.

Jeremiah was also forbidden to attend funerals or weddings.

The rest of the chapter is a further message from God, "you are worse than your fathers in your evil life, the land needs to be healed,"

See [2 Chronicles 36:14-21](#).

The Babylonians were like fishermen, even "fishing" into the hills. God was about to repay their evil with double punishment, verse 18

Jeremiah now looks into the future and saw a returning people, they were to rebuild the temple and return to worshipping the true God. Jeremiah 16:19-21.

Judah's sin cannot be erased.

[Jeremiah 17:1-ff](#)

All that is about to happen is their own fault, God's law should be on their hearts, instead, sin is written there. The people trusted their political friend nations, trusting flesh instead of God.

[Jeremiah 2:18.](#)

Jeremiah 17:9-13: Their sin is a disease of the heart, the rich robbed the poor and it ending in death, *"shall be written in the earth,"*

Jeremiah 17:14-18: Jeremiah's prayer to God is a cry for help, he asks to be delivered from his enemies.

Jeremiah 17:19-27: The people were not keeping the Sabbath, a special instruction from God to His people. the people were treating it like any other day, material gain was their main aim in life.

All that happened was the people hardened their hearts against the message.